

プレゼンテーション資料

社会福祉法人 日本国際社会事業団

補助事業名

～平成 24 年度子どもが幸せに暮らせる社会を作る活動補助事業～

社会福祉法人日本国際社会事業団 常務理事 大森 邦子

事務局長 伊部 亜理子



我が国における国際福祉の現場からの 報告

社会福祉法人日本国際社会事業団
International Social Service Japan
通称:ISSJ

国境を越えて愛の手を

日本国際社会事業団とは

1952年(昭和27年) 日米孤児救済合同委員会として、敗戦後、駐留軍兵士と日本人女性の間にも生まれた混血児の救済を目的に国際養子縁組の支援を始める。

1955年 International Social Serviceに加盟 ISS日本支部となる

1959年(昭和34年) 厚生省の認可を受け、社会福祉法人日本国際事業団 (International Social Service Japan-ISSJ)となる。

1965年 JKAからの第1回目の補助金を受ける

活動内容

- 国際養子縁組
- 在日難民・難民申請者の相談援助無国籍の子どもの国籍取得援助
- 国境を越える家族の再会援助
- 国際結婚の破たんによる子どもの奪取の相談援助
- カンボジアーストリートチルドレンの自立支援

ISSのネットワーク

- 本部：スイス・ジュネーブ1924に International Migration Serviceという名で、第一次世界大戦後、ヨーロッパに流出した難民や避難民の救済を目的に設立。国連の諮問委員でもある。
- 支部・通信員を140カ国に置く
- ユニセフ、難民高等弁務官事務所、国際赤十字社、ハーグ国際私法会議等とも協力関係にある。

国際養子縁組...JKA助成事業

* 養子と養親の国籍が異なる、あるいは別々の国に住む、血縁のない養親と養子の縁組を国際養子縁組という。

* 1983年のハーグ条約「国際養子縁組に関する子の保護及び国際協力に関する条約」は、国境を超える子どもの保護を最優先に考えた、世界共通の国際養子縁組の在り方を示している。残念ながら日本はまだ批准をしていないが、ISSJはハーグ条約に則った方法で国際養子縁組支援を行っている。

* 国際養子縁組の支援は養子縁組の手続きが終われば終了ではなく、何十年後かに養子が自分探し(ルーツ探し)を始めた時にも情報提供をする責任がある。

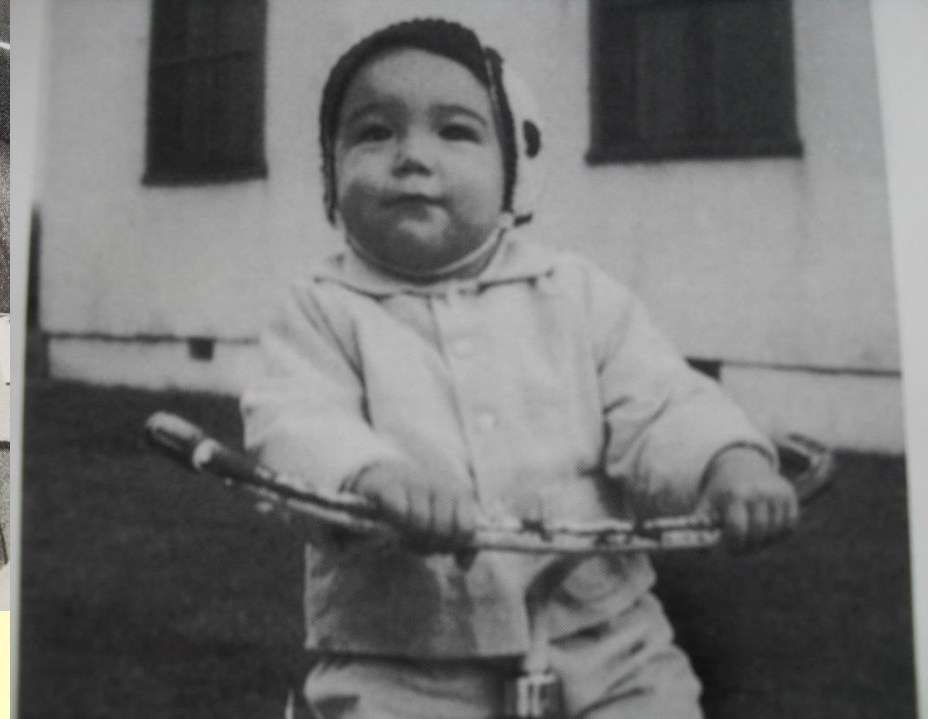
JKAとISSJ

- 1959年に当時の松田竹千代国会議員、葛西嘉資日本赤十字社副社長、植村甲午郎経団連副会長等が役員として、社会福祉法人日本国際社会事業団を設立。厚生省の認可を受けた時から5年間国庫扶助が付いた。
- 1965年から今日までJKAから補助金を頂き、半世紀を超えて活動を続けることが出来ている。養子縁組は金銭の授受が行われると人身売買につながりかねないが、JKAの補助金を頂くことで、日本国内だけでなく海外からも高く評価される事業が出来ている。

世界の潮流は施設から家庭へ

- * 日本では家庭養育が困難な子どもで児童養護施設や里親の下で暮らす子どもの数は4万人以上。
- * 欧米では「子どもを施設から家庭へ」が実践され、施設収容児童の数は激減している。
- * 日本は大型収容施設から小舎収容施設へと変えているが、施設収容中心であることには変わらない。
- * 厚生労働省は施設から家庭へと移行させるために養子縁組や里親による養育を充実するように検討を始めている。
- * ISSJの養子縁組事業が正しく行われていることは関係する外国大使館からも評価されており、厚生労働省も他の養子あっせん機関の範となるよう求めている。

養子縁組をした子どもたち



新しいパパとママのもとへ旅立ちの日

—ISSJのソーシャルワーカーと

国境を越えて愛の手を

新しいパパとママと一緒に



養子になって35年後、ISSJで実のお母さんと再会。「今の幸せはお母さんが悲しみに耐えて、僕を手放す勇気を持っていてくれたから。ありがとう、もう自分を責めないで」と伝えられたとき、とても幸せだった。



国境を越えて愛の手を



ISSJ創設者の松田竹千代衆議院議員
(当時)養子に行く子どもたち



養子と養親が本当の親になる過程での支援

養子は養親と住み始めると、様々な試みをする事がある。反抗する、いたづらをする、言うことを聞かないなど、養親にとっては時に自信を無くしたり、不安になったりする。

これは養子が、養親に対して、こんなに悪いことをする自分を愛することができるのかという試しである。この時期をISSJのソーシャルワーカーは彼らに寄り添い、励ましながら本当の親子の感情がうまれるための支援を行う。養子のあっせんだけが仕事ではない。養子縁組はその子どもの一生に責任を持たなければならない。

国境を越えて愛の手を

愛ちゃんのケース

愛ちゃんは日本人母と敗戦国日本に駐留してきた米国人父の間に非婚で生まれた。当時の日本社会は敵国の子ども、あいの子と言われ、差別を受けた。苦しんだ実母はISSJに養子縁組を依頼してきた。ISSJは父親と同じ米国籍の夫婦に養子縁組をした。ISSJの国際養子縁組第一号だった。養子斡旋から50年近くたって、愛ちゃんから実母に会いたいという連絡が入った。残念ながら実母は亡くなっていたが、弟がいた。事情を知らない二人の弟に連絡をして、会ってほしいとお願いをしたところ承諾をしてくださった。そして日本に来た愛ちゃんは初めて会う弟と実母のお墓参りをすることができた。第二人は「母はどんなにか愛ちゃんに会いたかったことでしょう。でも自分たちのために我慢をしたのかもしれません」と言い、これからは仲良くお付き合いをしていきますと言って、来年の再会を約束した。



愛ちゃん2歳
新しいパパとマ
マのもとに



愛ちゃん(真
ん中)と初対
面の実弟二
人

国境を越えて愛の手を

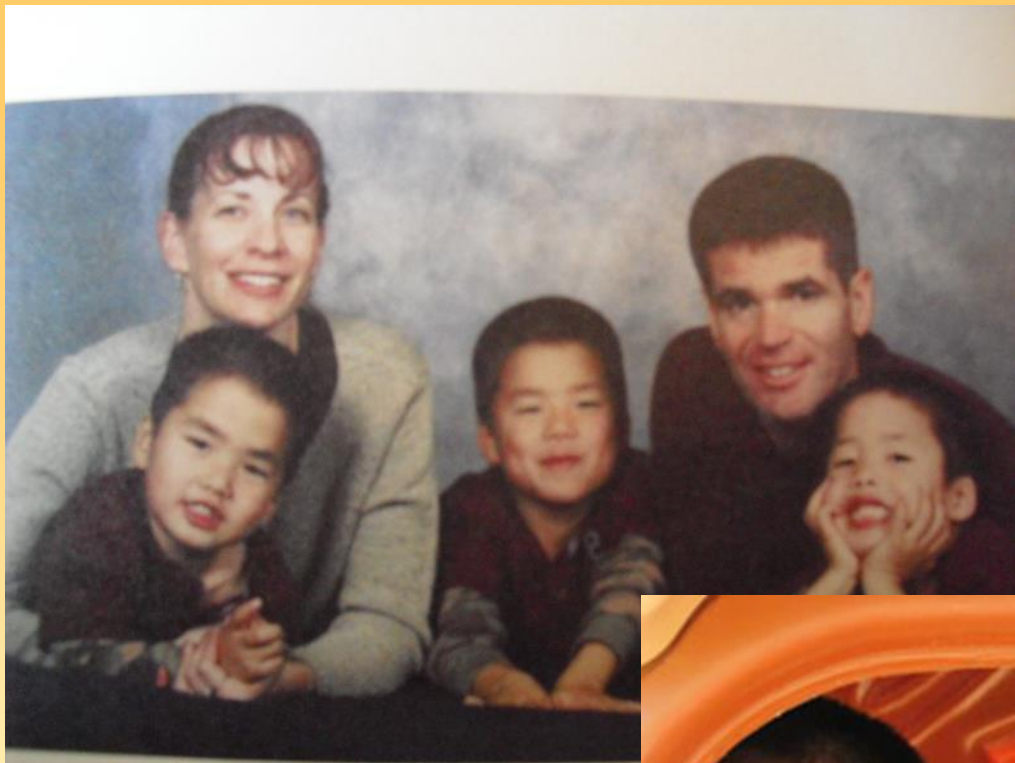
兄弟姉妹は一緒に養子縁組を

* 多くの養子縁組する子どもは家族を知らない。そこでISSJでは、兄弟姉妹がいるときは一緒に養子縁組をする。

* 時には児童相談所から子どもの養親を探してほしいと依頼されて調べていくと、別の児童相談所管轄の施設に兄弟がいることがわかる場合もある。

* しかし児童相談所が斡旋するときはたとえ兄弟姉妹であっても一人ひとり別の養親家庭に託している。その理由は、日本人の養親希望者が養子を迎えるとき、一人を希望するから。

* ISSJのポリシーは、兄弟姉妹がいる場合は一緒に同じ養親家庭に託置する。



三兄弟4歳、5歳、
6歳一緒に新しい
パパとママのもと
に

今では日常会話は
英語になり、学校生
活を楽しんでいる



* 難民支援—JKA補助事業として

①ベトナム、ラオス、カンボジア三国からの避難民

1975年5月米国船籍の船が海上を漂流中のベトナム難民を救助して、千葉港に入港したのが、我が国の難民受け入れのスタート。当時は日本はまだ難民条約に加盟していなかった。その後総理府（現内閣府）にインドシナ難民対策室を設置し難民条約批准、難民受け入れプログラムを進めた。ISSJはJKAの補助金を頂き、インドシナ難民の定住プログラムに参加。全国に大学で社会福祉を学習した69名のインドシナ難民定住相談員を組織し、個別の支援を行った。未成年の子どもには里親養護や養子縁組も行った。

インドシナ難民の定住相談事業からの経験—

1975年 ベトナムからボートピープル日本に上陸。その後、インドシナ三国[ベトナム・ラオス・カンボジア]から難民日本へ流入

総理府「現内閣府」からISSJにインドシナ難民の日本定住支援への協力要請があり、インドシナ難民定住促進援助を開始



難民申請者

日本に入国後自分は難民であると申請をし、日本政府の難民であるという認定を待っている人たちが1000人以上いる。彼らの多くはオーバーステイのため、ビザを持たない。

その結果

働くことができないので生活に困窮している。家賃が払えず、ホームレス状態。医療費が払えないので病気の治療ができない。就職しても、違法就労なので保険に加入できない。入国管理局の収容所に長期収容され、精神的不安。10年を超す長期滞在で、子どもの言語が日本語のみなどさまざまな問題が複雑に絡んでいる。JKAのご支援をいただいて始めたインドシナ難民の流れで、ISSJはカウンセリングや物質援助医療費援助や宿泊所探し等を、難民申請者が最低生活を保障されるよう支援を行っている。

条約難民とは

世界には迫害や紛争によって避難を余儀なくされている難民や国内避難民などが4,000万人以上いる。

日本に難民がいるのか

世界中から難民として日本に救いを求めている人が来ている。その数は千人を超えている。多くの人々は、難民と認定されるかどうか、日本政府から結果をもらうまで、長期間不安を抱えて暮らしている。

彼らはどんな暮らしをしているのか

多くの人たちは日本に来たものの、生活用品を持っていない、知り合いがいない、社会保障がない、住むところがない、働くことが許可されない、日本語が話せない、という厳しい状況の中で生活している。申請から認定まで1年以上がかかるので、厳しい生活を強いられている。

第三国定住難民とは

国連難民高等弁務官事務所 (UNHCR) は、難民問題の恒久的解決策の一つとして、難民キャンプ等で一時的に庇護を受けている難民を、新たに受入れに合意した第三国に定住させる、第三国定住による難民の受入れを各国に推奨している。

日本政府も3年間のパイロットケースとして、平成22年度からタイの難民キャンプに滞在するミャンマー難民を第三国定住による難民として受入れを実施。

第三国定住難民は、入国後、政府が提供する定住支援施設において約180日間の定住支援プログラムを受けた後、新たな定住先で自立生活を開始するので、ISSJは支援を行っている。

国境を越えて愛の手

- ISSJは「国境を越えて愛の手を」をモットーに、二か国以上に関わることで解決できる家族や個人の問題を、社会福祉の専門教育を受けたソーシャルワーカーが、国籍、人種、宗教、信条に関係なく、平等に解決援助を行う。

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

Bureau of Consular Affairs • U.S. Department of State



FY 2013 Annual Report on Intercountry Adoption March 2014

Pursuant to Section 104 of the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000 (IAA) (Public Law 106-279), the U.S. Department of State submits the FY 2013 Annual Report on Intercountry Adoption.

IAA §104(b) Report Elements:

- **§104(b) (1):** Tables 1 and 2 report the number of intercountry adoptions in FY 2013 involving immigration to the United States, regardless of whether or not the adoption occurred under the Hague Adoption Convention.
- **§104(b) (2):** Table 3 reports the number of intercountry adoptions in FY 2013 involving emigration from the United States, regardless of whether or not the adoption occurred under the Hague Adoption Convention.
- **§104(b) (3):** In FY 2013, adoption service providers (ASPs) reported five disrupted placements in Convention adoptions, i.e., cases in which there was an interruption of a placement for adoption during the post-placement (but pre-adoption) period. Table 6 summarizes this information.

In addition, information received from the Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to §422(b)(12) of the Social Security Act indicated 88 cases of disruptions and dissolutions involving 92 children who were adopted from other countries and entered state custody as a result. This information was provided in the annual update from states on progress made toward accomplishing goals and objectives in the Child and Family Services Plan. This information was submitted by states to the Department of Health and Human Services through an Annual Progress and Services Report (APSR). The most recent APSRs were submitted in June 2013 and contained information from FY 2012. All of the information provided by states in the APSR was included in this count regardless of the date provided from the states on specific actions taken in a case or when it was reported to the state.

- **§104(b) (4):** Table 4 reports the average time required for completion of a Hague Convention adoption.
- **§104(b) (5):** The current list of agencies accredited and persons approved is available on the Department's intercountry adoption website at http://adoption.state.gov/hague_convention/agency_accreditation/agency_search.php.
- **§104(b) (6):** The Secretary has not temporarily or permanently debarred an agency or person.
- **§104(b) (7):** ASPs reported charging between zero dollars and \$64,357 for all adoption services, with half charging less than \$28,845.85 and half charging more. Table 5 reports by Convention country of origin the median fees for country-specific services, including foreign country program expenses, contributions, care of child expenses, and travel/accommodations.
- **§104(b) (8):** Fees for accreditation of agencies and approval of persons ranged from \$5,000 to \$22,755.00. The Council on Accreditation's accreditation fee is based on documented revenues from its intercountry adoption programs; the Colorado Department of Human Services' fee was based on the number of cases that the applicant handled annually (the Colorado Department of Human Services ceased to operate as an accrediting entity on April 1, 2013). Accrediting Entity fees are found at the following link: [Council on Accreditation fees](#).

Table 1: Incoming Adoptions by Country of Origin
 (* denotes a non-Convention Country)

Country or Territory of Origin	Adoptions Finalized Abroad	Adoptions to be Finalized in the U.S.	Total Adoptions
*Afghanistan	0	2	2
Albania	6	0	6
*Algeria	2	0	2
Armenia	12	0	12
Azerbaijan	2	0	2
*Bangladesh	0	14	14
Belize	0	11	11
*Benin	1	0	1
*Bosnia-Herzegovina	1	0	1
Brazil	23	0	23
Bulgaria	159	0	159
Burkina Faso	3	0	3
Burundi	1	0	1
*Cameroon	7	0	7
Canada	0	4	4
China	2,301	5	2,306
Colombia	159	0	159
*Congo, Democratic Republic of the	25	288	313
*Congo, Republic of the	4	0	4
Costa Rica	10	0	10
*Cote D'Ivoire	2	0	2
*Dominica	5	0	5
Dominican Republic	13	0	13
Ecuador	11	0	11
*Egypt	0	1	1

Country or Territory of Origin	Adoptions Finalized Abroad	Adoptions to be Finalized in the U.S.	Total Adoptions
El Salvador	7	0	7
*Eritrea	3	4	7
*Ethiopia	950	43	993
Fiji	1	0	1
*Gambia, The	1	1	2
Georgia	5	0	5
*Ghana	118	52	170
Greece	1	0	1
*Grenada	3	0	3
Guatemala	23	0	23
Guinea	1	0	1
*Guinea - Bissau	1	4	5
*Guyana	49	1	50
*Haiti	365	23	388
*Honduras	19	0	19
Hong Kong	0	17	17
Hungary	23	0	23
India	97	22	119
*Indonesia	2	0	2
*Iran	0	3	3
*Jamaica	32	47	79
*Japan	1	21	22
*Jordan	0	4	4
Kenya	4	0	4
Latvia	89	0	89
*Lebanon	2	0	2
Lesotho	2	1	3
*Liberia	7	5	12
Lithuania	11	0	11
*Malawi	10	0	10

Country or Territory of Origin	Adoptions Finalized Abroad	Adoptions to be Finalized in the U.S.	Total Adoptions
*Malaysia	1	1	2
*Marshall Islands	18	0	18
Mexico	21	0	21
Mongolia	1	1	2
*Morocco	0	24	24
*Mozambique	3	0	3
*Namibia	1	0	1
*Nicaragua	37	0	37
*Niger	2	0	2
*Nigeria	181	2	183
*Pakistan	0	47	47
Panama	3	1	4
Peru	21	0	21
Philippines	6	172	178
Poland	49	0	49
*Republic of Korea	71	67	138
*Russia	249	1	250
*Samoa	2	7	9
*Serbia	7	0	7
*Sierra Leone	28	5	33
*Singapore	1	0	1
South Africa	17	0	17
*South Sudan	2	0	2
*St. Lucia	0	1	1
*St. Vincent and the Grenadines	18	0	18
*Sudan	1	0	1
*Suriname	0	1	1
*Syria	0	1	1
*Taiwan	76	18	94

Country or Territory of Origin	Adoptions Finalized Abroad	Adoptions to be Finalized in the U.S.	Total Adoptions
*Tanzania	9	0	9
Thailand	4	32	36
Togo	1	0	1
*Tonga	4	0	4
*Trinidad and Tobago	0	2	2
*Uganda	6	270	276
*Ukraine	403	35	438
United Kingdom	10	0	10
*Vanuatu	1	0	1
*Zambia	5	0	5
Total	5,833	1,261	7,094

Table 2: Incoming Adoptions by State

State	Adoptions Finalized Abroad	Adoptions to be Finalized in the United States	Total Adoptions
Overseas Americans	10	0	10
Alaska	14	8	22
Alabama	152	19	171
Arkansas	50	3	53
Arizona	75	19	94
California	360	117	477
Colorado	152	38	190
Connecticut	46	5	51
District of Columbia	15	8	23
Delaware	14	6	20
Florida	243	39	282
Georgia	237	42	279
Guam	1	3	4
Hawaii	12	10	22
Iowa	77	20	97
Idaho	39	17	56
Illinois	265	54	319
Indiana	166	69	235
Kansas	65	14	79
Kentucky	131	21	152
Louisiana	38	3	41
Massachusetts	90	17	107
Maryland	158	37	195
Maine	36	4	40
Michigan	200	31	231
Minnesota	170	35	205
Missouri	156	19	175

State	Adoptions Finalized Abroad	Adoptions to be Finalized in the United States	Total Adoptions
Mississippi	46	4	50
Montana	23	12	35
North Carolina	196	50	246
North Dakota	12	3	15
Nebraska	52	7	59
New Hampshire	11	8	19
New Jersey	111	25	136
New Mexico	24	14	38
Nevada	14	9	23
New York	292	68	360
Ohio	242	21	263
Oklahoma	62	30	92
Oregon	102	35	137
Pennsylvania	225	49	274
Puerto Rico	5	1	6
Rhode Island	18	1	19
South Carolina	104	18	122
South Dakota	16	2	18
Tennessee	222	40	262
Texas	417	72	489
Utah	97	11	108
Virginia	215	43	258
Virgin Islands	2	0	2
Vermont	16	1	17
Washington	199	42	241
Wisconsin	106	27	133
West Virginia	13	5	18
Wyoming	19	5	24
Total	5,833	1,261	7,094



Table 3: Outgoing (Emigrating) Adoptions

Receiving Country	U.S. State from which the Child Emigrated	Number of Outgoing Adoption Cases
Austria	Florida	1
	Florida	21
Canada	Illinois	1
	Indiana	2
	Minnesota	1
	New Jersey	2
	South Carolina	6
	Texas	1
	Utah	1
Ireland	Florida	5
	California	2
Netherlands	Florida	15
	Hawaii	1
	Maine	1
	Missouri	1
	New Jersey	16
	New York	2
	Florida	2
Switzerland	Florida	2
Tanzania	California	1
United Kingdom	Florida	1
	Missouri	1
Total		84

Table 4: Convention Adoptions and Average Number of Days to Completion by Convention Country

Convention Country	Number of Convention Cases	Average Days to Completion
Albania	6	475
Armenia	12	411
Azerbaijan	2	436
Belize	11	309
Brazil	23	511
Bulgaria	158	380
Burkina Faso	3	356
Burundi	1	601
Canada	4	181
China	2,239	257
Colombia	159	397
Costa Rica	10	560
Dominican Republic	12	588
Ecuador	11	236
El Salvador	5	649
Georgia	5	461
Greece	1	375
Guinea	1	469
Hong Kong	17	338
Hungary	23	312
India	117	616
Kenya	4	456
Latvia	89	315
Lithuania	11	261
Mexico	19	536
Mongolia	1	474

Convention Country	Number of Convention Cases	Average Days to Completion
Panama	4	71
Peru	21	534
Philippines	169	444
Poland	49	393
South Africa	17	224
Thailand	36	605
Togo	1	651
United Kingdom	10	328

Table 5: Median ASP Convention Adoption Fees

Convention Country of Origin	Median Fees	Convention Country of Origin	Median Fees
Albania	\$27,160	Hong Kong	\$10,500
Armenia	\$19,825	Hungary	\$21,735
Azerbaijan	\$18,080	India	\$14,073
Belize	\$15,750	Kenya	\$6,250
Brazil	\$10,413	Latvia	\$16,847
Bulgaria	\$12,550	Lithuania	\$14,892
Burkina Faso	\$13,000	Mexico	\$14,250
Burundi	\$16,700	Mongolia	\$18,890
Canada	\$20,000	Panama	\$13,328
China	\$15,675	Peru	\$11,500
Colombia	\$17,300	Philippines	\$8,800
Costa Rica	\$15,675	Poland	\$17,000
Dominican Republic	\$15,300	South Africa	\$26,994
Ecuador	\$6,750	Thailand	\$14,920
El Salvador	\$14,500	United Kingdom	\$11,000
Georgia	\$18,800		

Table 6: The Number of Convention Placements for Adoption in the United States that were Disrupted

Country from which the Child Emigrated	The Age of the Child at Placement	The Date of Placement for Adoption	The Reasons for the Disruption	The Resolution of the Disruption	The Agency that Handled the Original Placement	Plans for the Child
China	6	15-Jan-2013	Medical	Child returned to the Social Welfare Institute in the country of origin	Living Hope Adoption Agency	Remain in country of origin
Philippines	15	7-Feb-2013	Medical	Child returned to the Philippines and is enrolled in an independent living program sponsored by Holt International	Holt International	Placed in country of origin
Philippines	4	22-Feb-2013	Concerns expressed by the family during the second post-placement report	Child placed with a family	Christian Adoption Services, Inc.	Placed in the United States
China	3	29-April-2013	The child decided that she did not want to be adopted	Child returned to the orphanage	China Adoption With Love, Inc.	Remain in the country of origin
Philippines	17	21-Dec-2013	A bond was not established between the child and the prospective adoptive parents	Permanent placement with another family	Pearl S. Buck International	Placed in the United States

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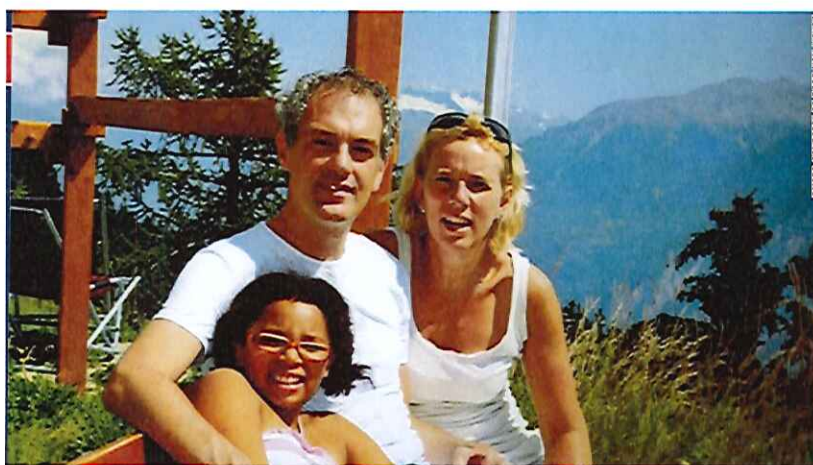
Overseas adoptions rise -- for black American children

By Sophie Brown, for CNN
September 17, 2013 -- Updated 1238 GMT (2038 HKT)

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Elisa van Meurs with her adoptive parents Bart and Heleene van Meurs on vacation in Switzerland.

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

While adoptions to the U.S. are in steep decline, more U.S. children are being adopted abroad

The rise of "open adoptions" where birth mothers choose adopting parents has led this trend

Most U.S. children being adopted abroad are African American babies, adoption attorneys say

Experts: Birth mothers are drawn by the exotic locale and a perceived escape from racism

Editor's note: In this series, CNN investigates international adoption, hearing from families, children and key experts on its decline, and whether the trend could -- or should -- be reversed.

(CNN) -- Elisa van Meurs grew up with a Polish au pair, speaks fluent Dutch and English and loves horseback riding -- her favorite horse is called Kiki but she also rides Pippi Longstocking, James Bond, and Robin Hood.

She plays tennis and ice hockey, and in the summer likes visiting her grandmother in the Swiss Alps.

"It's really nice to go there because you can walk in the mountains and you can mountain bike ... you can see Edelweiss sometimes," said the 13-year-old, referring to the famous mountain flower that blooms above the tree line.

It's a privileged life unlike that of her birth mother, a woman of African American descent from Indianapolis who had her first child at age 15. Her American family is "really nice but they don't have a lot of money to do stuff," said Elisa, who met her birth mother, and two siblings in 2011. "They were not so rich."

I thought it was so strange. I'm here in Holland and they're telling me I can get a (U.S.) baby

Bart van Meurs, adoptive father

While the number of international adoptions is plummeting -- largely over questions surrounding the origin of children put up for adoption in developing countries -- there is one nation from which parents abroad can adopt a healthy infant in a relatively short time whose family history and medical background is unclouded by doubt: The United States.

"I thought it was so strange. I'm here in Holland and they're telling me I can get a baby" from the U.S., recalled Elisa's father, Bart van Meurs, who originally planned to adopt from China or Colombia but held little hope of



Part of complete coverage on International adoption

Overseas adoptions in steep decline

September 17, 2013 -- Updated 1052 GMT (1852 HKT)



After rising for decades, the number of overseas adoptions has dropped by almost half since 2004. In this series, CNN probes the reasons behind the decline and whether the trend could -- or should -- be reversed.

Interactive: Falling international adoptions

September 16, 2013 -- Updated 0552 GMT (1352 HKT)



International adoptions steadily rose since the 1950s before exploding in the 1990s with the end of the Cold War and the opening of China and Russia. But for the past decade its been in freefall.

Rising overseas adoptions -- for black American children

September 17, 2013 -- Updated 1238 GMT (2038 HKT)



While the number of international adoptions is plummeting, there is one nation from which parents abroad can adopt a healthy infant in a relatively short time: The United States.

Saving orphans or child trafficking?

September 18, 2013 -- Updated 1841 GMT (0241 HKT)



Advocates say international adoption system is holding orphans hostage in red tape. Critics say adoption from developing nations feeds nefarious practices. A "business" in need of reform.

receiving an infant. "This can't be true." But less than 18 months later, van Meurs and his wife Heleene were at an Indiana hospital holding four-day-old Elisa.



While the typical tale of international adoption is U.S. families adopting a child from abroad, foreign families like the van Meurs adopt scores of U.S. children each year. The numbers are far lower than the thousands of overseas children adopted each year by U.S. families, but over the past decade the number of U.S. children adopted by foreign parents has been steadily rising -- and almost all of the children are of African American descent like Elisa, say attorneys who facilitate international adoptions.

Read more: Why are international adoptions falling?

U.S. laws that allow birth mothers to choose the adoptive family of their children feed that growth, as some prefer to see their kids grow up in an exotic overseas locale rather than the U.S., experts say.

"A family from Indiana might talk about taking their child on vacation to Florida, to Disneyworld. A Dutch family talks about taking their child on vacation to the south of France or the Alps," said Steven Kirsh of Kirsh & Kirsh, an Indianapolis law firm that has helped place hundreds of children with families in Europe.



The van Meurs on Florence's Ponte Vecchio during a family vacation earlier this year in Italy.

Escape from racism

When Susan, a Florida resident, chose to place her son for adoption in 2006, the social worker gave her three binders with information about three prospective families. But she only needed to see the first binder of a couple from the Netherlands to make her decision. "If my mother had lived, she'd look just like (the prospective Dutch mother)," recalled the 37 year old, who asked that her last name not be used. Her own mother died when she was two months old.

Susan also wanted her son to grow up far away from the life she knew. She was a 30-year-old prostitute addicted to crack beginning a prison sentence when she learned she was pregnant. She did not know whether the child's father was a man who raped her "for hours" or a drug dealer whom she "had done something with" one time, she said. But both men were African American, and she believed the child would face discrimination growing up in the United States.

White people are going to hate him because he's half black ... black people are going to hate on him because he's half white

Susan, birth mother who chose a Dutch family

"There's too much prejudice over here. The white people are going to hate him because he's half black, and the majority of black people are going to hate on him because he's half white," said Susan, who is Caucasian. "And then he'll have to do extra things to prove what kind of a Negro he is, and extra things to prove what kind of a honky he is and I don't want that. I did not want that for my kid."

Even her own daughter, then aged 11, said "she would never accept that n***** child."

Susan is not alone, says Adam Pertman, Executive Director of the Donaldson Adoption Institute and author of "Adoption Nation." Many birth mothers have a perception that their black or mixed-race children will not face the same race issues in the Netherlands as in the United States.

I was stolen from my family

September 18, 2013 -- Updated 0724 GMT (1524 HKT)



Tarikuwa Lemma thought she was moving from Ethiopia to the U.S. for a "living study" program in the United States. She was wrong.

From refugee to soccer MVP

September 18, 2013 -- Updated 0746 GMT (1546 HKT)



Born in a Cambodian refugee camp, Srey Powers became an all-star soccer player in the U.S. In 2010, she traveled to Cambodia to find her birth family.

Deborra-lee Furness: Fight the global orphan crisis

September 16, 2013 -- Updated 0511 GMT (1311 HKT)



Actress, activist and wife of actor Hugh Jackman tells why she is one of the leading voices in the fight to keep international adoption alive.

U.S. adoptee activists lead fight to end S. Korean adoptions

September 17, 2013 -- Updated 0021 GMT (0821 HKT)



South Korea was a pioneer of international adoptions. But now U.S. adoptees are leading the fight to halt the practice.

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"In the United States, as much as Americans want to believe it's not true, we are still a country where there is at least some degree of racial prejudice. The birth mothers' perception of Holland, in particular, was that the same was not true in Holland. There's that feeling that maybe we can escape those issues if (the child is) somewhere else."



Seventy Dutch families who adopted U.S. kids gather for an annual Fathers Day picnic in June.

Dutch Father's Day -- American style

This past June on Father's Day, about 70 Dutch families who have adopted children from the U.S. gathered at a park outside Amsterdam. The picnic is a time for the children to celebrate their American heritage: "The kids are dressed with a red, white and blue beret in her hair, if it's a girl, (or) they're wearing New York Yankees t-shirts," said Michael Goldstein, a New York attorney who facilitated the adoptions of the picnic attendees.

Bluntly, the U.S. is probably the only country that will allow a gay couple to adopt a child

Michael Goldstein, adoption attorney

Among the families were Marielle van den Biggelaar, a stay-at-home mom and her husband, Marnix, a sales manager for a women's clothing brand, who adopted their two children, Eva, four, and two-year-old Norbert as babies from Florida and New York, respectively. "For the kids it's really important to see that they're not alone and that all these kids have the same history, and they're all adopted and they're all from the same country," Marielle said.

"It's really nice to see them all together and to talk to each other about experiences -- with their hair and with their skin -- and they're all the same people with the same mindset, so it's really fun for the kids and for us, as well."

The couple encourages their children to embrace their American origins, celebrating Thanksgiving each year with other families who adopted children from the United States. "We try to tell them about their culture and about their background," said Marielle, who decided to adopt after years of unsuccessful fertility treatment. "We would love them to (start speaking) English when they're really young because if they want to go back (to America) and if they want to see where they're born, it would be nice if they can speak to ... their parents if they are going to meet them."

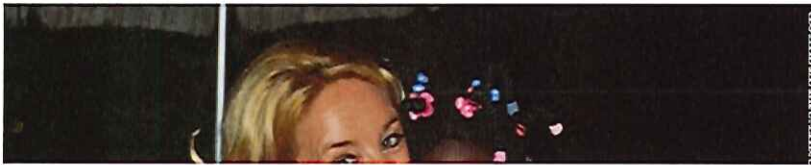
Their children stand out in Het Gooi, a village about 30 miles (50 kilometers) from Amsterdam. "They're famous here, where we live, because it's a really white society," Marielle said.

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Marielle van den Biggelaar with her 4-year-old daughter, Eva, who was adopted from the U.S.

Some of the parents at the June picnic were same-sex couples. With laws in some states allowing gay marriage and adoption, the United States is one of the few countries from which gays and lesbians can adopt, and many U.S.-born children sent to the Netherlands have been adopted by same-sex families, according to Anneke Vinke, a Dutch adoption expert at the University of Leiden. In the last five years, 17% of the U.S. children that Goldstein helped to place with foreign families were adopted by gay couples.

"Bluntly, the U.S. is probably the only country that will allow a gay couple to adopt a child," Goldstein said, adding that some states allow couples, gay or straight, to adopt whether they're married or not.

"So the gay families of the world, when they can't adopt in their own countries or don't want to necessarily, and want to adopt a baby, they're going to turn to the U.S."

Why the Netherlands?

2

Reliable data on overseas adoptions of American children is hard to come by. Last year the U.S. State Department officially reported that 99 American children were adopted by foreign families. But the real number is almost certainly higher, said Peter Selman, an expert on international adoption at Newcastle University in the U.K. who acts as a statistical adviser to the U.N. body that oversees international adoptions.

For example, in 2010 the U.S. State Department counted only 43 U.S. kids who were adopted overseas, but the same year five countries – Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Ireland – reported adoptions of 205 children born in the U.S., Selman said. According to statistics by receiving countries, there were 126 U.S. children adopted overseas in 2004, steadily rising to 315 in 2009.

Most American families were, and still are, interested in adopting a white infant

Steven Kirsh, past president of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys

"The United States has sent an increasing number of children for overseas adoptions in recent years," Selman said. Goldstein, the New York attorney, also says that the number of outgoing adoptions he facilitates now is higher than a decade ago.

3

The State Department's system for tracking international adoptions only includes reports from certain adoption providers, such as those accredited under an international treaty known as the Hague Convention, a spokesperson said. Other adoptions involving U.S. children, like those completed through the foster care system, are not counted. "In order to address that shortcoming, we have

increased our outreach efforts to encourage receiving countries and public domestic authorities to report the outgoing adoption information to us," State Department spokesperson Elizabeth Finan said by email.

Canada is the number one destination for children adopted from the U.S. – 148 went there in 2010 – likely owing to its proximity, experts say. But the Netherlands has consistently ranked second each year; about 250 U.S. children were adopted by Dutch families from 2004 to 2010.

The popularity of American children for Dutch families appears to have grown by word-of-mouth after Steven Kirsh, the Indiana adoption attorney, helped an acquaintance's sister – who lived in the Netherlands with her Dutch husband – adopt from the U.S. in the 1990s. Similarly, Goldstein began providing adoptions for the Netherlands after a Dutch family working for the U.N. sought his help for a U.S. adoption.



Adoption attorney: 'The Dutch families were just interested in adopting an infant. The color of the child's skin didn't matter to them.'

"Most American families were, and still are, interested in adopting a white infant. The Dutch families were just interested in adopting an infant. The color of the child's skin didn't matter to them," said Kirsh, former president of the American Academy of Adoption Attorneys. "We were getting some incredible families adopting -- just the best of the best. It was easy for the birth moms to fall in love with these couples."

Children with special needs

Following the decline in international adoptions, most children being adopted from overseas are defined as having special needs, such as developmental disabilities. The U.S. babies are often not special needs children, although some states prioritize adoptions for non-Caucasian children. U.S. babies going to the Netherlands might have a "minimum exposure to drugs, but usually some kind of lighter type of drugs like marijuana," said Goldstein.

Susan's son was exposed to crack cocaine during the first 10 weeks of her pregnancy, but he has been lucky. "The doctors have said there are absolutely no side effects from the drugs," she said.

As the former crack-addicted prostitute that I was, I had seen so many girls that went through foster care

Susan, on giving her child for adoption

Kirsh says the most common misconception about birth mothers is that they turn to adoption because they want to get rid of the baby or don't love the child. For Susan, adoption was a last resort.

"I tried to get family but I had nobody to take my kid. My grandmother was too old; my father had just had a major heart attack. I had nobody to take him." She even turned to an abusive ex: "I even begged him. I had nobody. Nobody."

Foster care wasn't an option either: "As the former crack-addicted prostitute that I was, I had seen so many girls that went through foster care, and the abuse and, you know, it's awful. It's awful there."

"I didn't want to keep him in foster care. It's not fair. It's not fair for me to think: Well, you know what, one day I might get my life together. Well, you know what? Your life is not together now and your baby needs love now."

An open adoption

Foreign families are generally more willing to have some level of openness than American families, according to Kirsh, and this can make them more attractive to birth mothers. "The Dutch families would, for example, want the birth mother to help name the child, because they wanted the child to have that connection to the birth mother. Almost never does an American family do that."

Dana Naughton, an adoption researcher at the Pennsylvania State University said that the foreign families were involved in some of the first open adoptions in the U.S., where a culture of secrecy around adoptions was once common and children may not even have known they were adopted.

"In some ways these adoptions are pioneering international open adoption. That's not a process that's common in terms of

communication between adoptive families and birth families. And to varying degrees it is what underpins this process," Naughton said.



Marnix van den Biggelaar with his 2-year-old son, Norbert.

For Dutch parents, adopting a U.S. child is luck of the draw — and the birth mothers hold all the cards. The biological mother of the van den Biggelaars' first child, Eva, chose them as adoptive parents just nine weeks before the baby was due, and Eva arrived three weeks early. "Instead of nine months of pregnancy... we had six weeks only to prepare for a baby — that was really crazy," says Marielle van den Biggelaar. The van den Biggelaars sent their "dear birth mom" letter to Goldstein, the adoption attorney, in November 2008 and were chosen by Eva's birth mom three months later, in January. The family declined to disclose how much they paid, but in general the amount for Dutch families ranges from \$35,000 to \$50,000, according to Goldstein.

Two-year-old Norbert is at preschool now and already takes judo lessons, which his mother describes as "all these little guys, two years old, tumbling through the room in little white suits." His four-year-old sister, Eva, is "really sweet and really protective and also sometimes really naughty but that belongs to her age I think," she said.

Their children comprehend the basics of their adoptions — they were born in a different country and "out of the belly of a different mom" — and the van den Biggelaars are saving the details for when the children are "old enough to understand and to know what happened and why it happened."

But those explanations can wait. "They're really cute together, they really love each other, and that's really nice to see," their mother said.

Meeting her birth family

One of the advantages for the parents of Elisa van Meurs in adopting from the U.S. was the access to information about Elisa's mother and her medical background. "I can always find her because I have the social security number. I have one sister and she lives in the U.S. so it's not a strange country to me, whereas China is — and I can't understand Chinese," Bart van Meurs said.

In America I feel at home, and when I'm in Holland I feel at home, too

Elisa van Meurs, adopted by Dutch family

Since Elisa was a baby, her parents have sent a letter and photographs to her biological mother each year through the Kirsh & Kirsh adoption agency.

In 2011, curious to know more about her origins, Elisa traveled to Florida to meet her biological mother and her extended family. Elisa's birth-grandmother and mom told the van Meurs that they were willing to meet Elisa anywhere in the U.S. and Elisa mentioned she would like to meet close to Disneyworld.

Elisa had one wish. She wanted to meet all her family members on this first "meet and greet" except her birth mom. "She thought it would be too much for her to also meet her birth mom then," said van Meurs. She met her birth mom the next morning at Gatorland, a small theme park.

Meeting them was strange at first and she was astonished to recognize familiar features in her mother and grandfather's faces.

"My nose is the same!" she said.

She's glad that they met: "For me, it feels like happiness because I really wanted to know how they looked like (and) because they really know how you are." But now they just go on with their lives, she said, except for the occasional call on Christmas Day and they became Facebook friends. "If (I) go there maybe too much, my mother will miss me or something like that."



Elisa van Meurs on a family holiday to Cap d'Antibes, France in May 2012.

Asked what she thinks her life would be like had she not been adopted, Elisa said, "I never thought about it, because now I live here."

While she looks forward to traveling to the Alps, her favorite holiday destination is America. Every two years or so, they visit Bart van Meurs' sister near Detroit, Michigan, where Elisa enjoys roller-skating, eating hamburgers and French fries, "all the bad stuff," she said.

"In America I feel at home, and when I'm in Holland I feel at home, too."

Sobriety after prison

In Florida, Susan has been out of prison and sober for four years. She works several jobs, has an apartment and is raising her three-year-old daughter with her fiancée, the girl's father.

She and her American family stay in touch with her son, now 7, and his adoptive family in the Netherlands. They send DVDs and photo albums, and traveled to the U.S. in 2011 and again this February. Susan's daughter, the one who rejected her son before his birth, has even had a change of heart. "She doesn't care about the race anymore," Susan said. "She loves her brother."

I thought it was the end of the world, and it wasn't

Susan, birth mother on giving up child

It's not always easy for Susan to see photos of the son she gave up. "There's always something missing. There's always something gone but I am glad I get to see him growing up. Yes, I am."

And she loves the boy's adoptive parents, especially his mother. "I love her to death. She is just... she's his mom, and that's amazing to watch.

"I don't want girls to be scared," Susan said of other birth mothers considering giving their children up for adoption. "This isn't an ending. It's a beginning. For me, I thought it was the end of the world, and it wasn't.

"I never thought it would be like this."

CNN's Kevin Voigt contributed to this article

- ① While the typical tale of international adoption is U.S. families adopting a child from abroad, foreign families like the van Meurs adopt scores of U.S. children each year. The numbers are far lower than the thousands of overseas children adopted each year by U.S. families, but over the past decade the number of U.S. children adopted by foreign parents has been steadily rising -- and almost all of the children are of African American descent like Elisa, say attorneys who facilitate international adoptions.

「米国における代表的な国際養子縁組は、米国人家族が海外から養子を迎えるというものだが、外国人家族が米国の子どもを養子に迎えるケースも年々増加している。もちろん米国人家族が毎年養子に迎える何千人に比べたら数は少ないものの、外国人家族に養子縁組された米国人の子どもの数は確実に増えており、そのほとんどがアフリカ系アメリカ人である」と、国際養子縁組を手助けしている弁護士が述べている。

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For example, in 2010 the U.S. State Department counted only 43 U.S. kids who were adopted overseas, but the same year five countries -- Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and Ireland -- reported adoptions of 205 children born in the U.S., Selman said. According to statistics by receiving countries, there were 126 U.S. children adopted overseas in 2004, steadily rising to 315 in 2009.

海外に養子にいった米国の子どもの数の正確な把握は困難である。国務省の正式発表によると昨年（2012年）、外国人家庭に養子縁組された米国の子どもの数は99人であるが、英国ニューキャッスル大学で国際養子縁組を専門に研究しており、国際養子縁組を監督する国連組織への統計アドバイザーも務めるピーター・セルマン氏によると実際はもっと多いと述べている。

例えば、2010年において米国国務省が発表した統計では43人であったが、カナダ、オランダ、ドイツ、スイス、アイルランドの5カ国の報告によると合計で205人が養子縁組されたとセルマン氏は述べている。受入国側の統計によると2004年に国際養子縁組をした米国人の子どもは126人で、2009年には315人となり、増加している。

- ③ The State Department's system for tracking international adoptions only includes reports from certain adoption providers, such as those accredited under an international treaty known as the Hague Convention, a spokesperson said. Other adoptions involving U.S. children, like those completed through the foster care system, are not counted. "In order to address that shortcoming, we have increased our outreach efforts to encourage receiving countries and public domestic authorities to report the outgoing adoption information to us," State Department spokesperson Elizabeth Finan said by email.

Canada is the number one destination for children adopted from the U.S. -- 148 went there in 2010 -- likely owing to its proximity, experts say. But the Netherlands has consistently ranked second each year; about 250 U.S. children were adopted by Dutch families from 2004 to 2010.

国務省の調査による国際養子縁組の数はハーグ条約の下に認可された養子縁組あっせん機関からの報告のみで計算されたものであると国務省の広報担当官は述べている。米国の子どもの養子縁組で、例えば里親制度を通して行われたものは数に含まれてはいない。この計算上の不備を正す為に、受入国側や地方の公的機関から情報提供をしてもらうよう積極的に働きかけていると担当官は述べている。受入国の No.1 はカナダで 2010 年には 148 人の米国の子どもが養子縁組されており、これは地理的近さによるものと専門家は述べている。毎年、次にくるのがオランダである。2004 年から 2010 年までに約 250 人の米国人の子どもがオランダ人家庭に養子縁組されている。

日本からの養子縁組数

(アメリカ国務省の統計資料より)

年度	合計	年齢別						性別		ビザ別	
		0~1	1~2	3~4	5~ 12	13~ 17	18~	男	女	IR-3	IR-4
2013	22	20		1	1			18	4	1	21
2012	21	17	3	1				18	3	2	19
2011	27	24	2	1				11	16	3	24
2010	32	26	2	1	2	1		19	13	3	29
2009	41	30	3	3	5			20	21	9	32
2008	35	26	7	2				14	21	6	29
2007	33	24	8			1		15	18	7	26
2006	42	28	10		4			23	19	10	32
2005	28	18	4	3	3			13	15	5	23
2004	43	30	12	1				22	21	9	34
2003	35	29	5	1				19	16	6	29
2002	40	27	10	3				24	16	8	32
2001	38	31	5	1	1			14	24	6	32
2000	33	23	9	1				17	16	8	25
1999	35	23	7	2	3			20	15	12	23

年度＝前年10月1日から当該年9月末まで